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ABSTRACT

Developed by the Oregon Elementary English Project, this curriculum unit contains drama activities intended for grades one and two. The activities are not ordered in a definite sequence; rather they are meant to be used as the opportunity arises. The activities are divided into (1) exercises based on puppetry, including a puppet hunt, the making of puppets, and puppet plays; (2) selected individual lessons using body movement to express thought and character and to focus student attention on a specific idea, such as happiness or trouble; and (3) short activities intended for one- to five-minute interludes. The short activities focus on holidays and seasons, senses, animals, play, make-believe, and miscellaneous. (HOD)

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ED 087001

Levels A - B
(Grades 1 & 2)

GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

VOLUME I
Part A

DRAMA ACTIVITIES

Developed under contract with the
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by

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SUGGESTED TEACHING SEQUENCE

The games and activities in Drama, Composition, and Language that make up most of the contents of this first volume of the curriculum for grades 1-2 are intended to be used whenever you think your children are ready for them or whenever an opportunity arises that would lead easily and naturally into one of the games or activities. In other words, although some of the games and activities are simpler and others more complex, although some require an elementary reading ability and others do not, they are not organized in a definite sequence, nor do we suggest that one is needed. Many of the games, in fact, can be played over and over throughout the year by individual children or groups of children.

The poems in the second volume of this series and the stories in the third have not been arranged in a definite sequence either, but in this case it has seemed wise to suggest a possible way of organizing the poems and stories through the school year as an aid to the teacher. There is nothing inevitable about the order suggested, and you should feel free to work out a different sequence of your own suited to the needs and interests of your class, or to vary the suggested plan as you see fit. In the suggested schedule that follows, we have starred (*) those lessons that pertain to certain seasons of the year or certain holidays and ought if possible to be used at the time indicated.

Some of the Literature lessons are accompanied by a Drama, a Composition, or a Language lesson. When this happens, this outline will indicate the fact by adding Dr (Drama), Co (Composition), or La (Language) following the title of the poem or story around which the Literature lesson is built.

Most of the lessons for these two years call only for oral responses from the children. When a lesson requires writing by the children, a small (w) after the title in this outline will let you know.

SEPTEMBER

LITERATURE

Poetry

Hands	Dr*	La	
Feet	Dr*	La	
The Rabbit			
Regent's Park			
Counting Out Rhyme			
A Muddy Good Time			
I Can Be a Tiger			
Mice			Co

Stories

Snow White			
The Pancake			Co

OCTOBER

LITERATURE

Poetry

Autumn Woods		La	
Song of the Cornpopper	Dr*	La	Co
Secret Song		La	Co(w)
Halloween	Dr	La	
At the Zoo			
"I look outside and think..."			
Skyscrapers			

OCTOBER (cont'd)

Stories

Hansel and Gretel	Dr		Co
Teeney Tiny			
The Old Woman in the Wood			

NOVEMBER

LITERATURE

Poetry

November Night			Co
It Is Raining	Dr	La	
Ki tchen Tunes	Dr		Co
Wind Song		La	Co
In the Fog			
Little Puppy			
Forecast			Co

Stories

The Three Little Pigs	Dr		
The Magic Ring			

DECEMBER

LITERATURE

Poetry

Going to Bed		La(w)	
Do You Know?	Dr		Co(w)
The Toaster			Co
Halfway Down			Co

Stories

The Golden Goose	Dr		
The Elves and the Shoemaker	Dr		

JANUARY

LITERATURE

Poetry

White Fields			Co
Furry Bear			
Snowman	Dr		
Roads		La	Co
Waking		La	
I Can Be a Tiger			

Stories

Why Evergreen Trees Keep Their Leaves in Winter	Dr		Co
Rumplestiltskin			
The Fairy			

FEBRUARY

LITERATURE

Poetry

Go Wind	Dr		
Elf and the Dormouse	Dr	La	Co
Fog			Co(w)
Little Snail			
If I Had a Dollar			
Whistle			

Stories

The Traveling Musicians			Co
The Three Billy Goats Gruff	Dr		

MARCH

LITERATURE

Poetry

A Kite		La	Co
Little Black Bug			Co
The Hayloft		La	
The Wind			
Dandelion			
The Little Turtle			
"I'd ride a camel..."			
Mine	Dr		

MARCH (cont'd)

Stories

East O' the Sun and West O' the Moon	Dr		Co
The Lad Who Went to the North Wind			

APRIL

LITERATURE

Poetry

How Creatures Move			Co
Fuzzy Wuzzy, Creepy Crawly	Dr		
How Do You Know It's Spring?	Dr	La(w)	Co
Eletelephony		La	
Rinky Rally Billy Bo			Co(w)
Only My Opinion			
To a Squirrel			
Chums			
April Rain Song	Dr		Co(w)

Stories

How the Robin's Breast Became Red	Dr		

MAY

LITERATURE

Poetry

Names		La	
I Know a Place		La	Co
My Shadow			Co
The Bear	Dr		Co
The Little Plant	Dr	La	
Hey, Bug!		La	Co
Raccoons	Dr	La	Co
Caterpillar			

Stories

The Big Turnip	Dr*		Co

JUNE

LITERATURE

Poetry

The Ice Cream Man	La	Co
Bees	La(w)	Co
Puppy and I		
Barefoot Days		
They're Building a Mound		

Stories

Brier Rose

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THE DRAMA STRAND

Introduction

DEFINITIONS

Drama essentially means to do or to act.

Informal drama (also called creative drama, improvisational drama, or playmaking) is an art in which children use improvised movement, gesture, and speech to enact an idea, situation, or literary selection. In informal drama, the emphasis is on the process of creating, as opposed to formal drama, in which the emphasis is on the product--normally performed for an audience.

An improvisation is an exercise in which the participants extemporize a situation. Often certain determinants are given as starting or focal points. For example, the teacher might say, "You found a kitten you want very much to keep. Your mother says you cannot have a pet. Improvise the scene."

To pantomime is to act without words. For example, "Pantomime what might happen if you were alone at night and you heard footsteps outside the window."

Movement in drama refers to the way the body moves, taking the aspects of time, space, weight, body shape, body flow, and relationship to others into consideration.

Theatre form refers to the external staging devices, such as costumes, lighting, properties, and so on, used to enhance and clarify the plot and the characters.

OBJECTIVES OF INFORMAL DRAMA

The objectives of informal drama fall into two important categories: one concerns the child, the other concerns the art. Although the two categories are separated for discussion purposes, the objectives of each should constantly reinforce the other. When one category is consistently stressed more than the other, one is likely to find child therapy and little or no art, or art at the expense and perhaps even to the detriment of child development.

I. Child Development: Objectives

Informal drama seeks to help the child develop an awareness of himself--his physical being, which is the instrument he creates with and communicates with. He becomes aware of the way his muscles respond in movement, the way his body relates to space and to others in space, the

way varying degrees and kinds of effort reflect different attitudes and moods. He becomes aware of his voice and the different ways he can use it to extend and amplify which he is creating, whether through sounds or words.

Informal drama seeks to help the child become aware of himself as a creative being. The creative experience can be described as that time when one becomes so involved in the activity, consciously and unconsciously, that without seeming effort ideas flow in rapid succession, images arise to clarify thoughts, relationships are perceived, and, if one is working specifically in the art of drama, suddenly the movement, the words, the total expression is truthful and right. Even if the experience is momentary, one feels at once exhilarated and satisfied. This is the kind of experience we hope each child can be involved in.

Informal drama seeks to help the child envision himself as an organizer of experience, secure enough to react with spontaneity, flexibility, and absorption, as he learns to control his physical being--his instrument--physically, mentally and emotionally, thereby giving form to the art.

Informal drama seeks to offer opportunities for the child to become more aware of his environment. After a baby discovers the delight of playing with his own fingers and toes and feels comfortable with himself, he expands his vision to include other aspects of his environment. So it is in drama--as the child moves and speaks with growing confidence and faith in his own capacities, his vision and awareness expand. The teacher sees that there are various manipulable objects or furnishings available for stimulation within the classroom. And of course the child sheds light on his own awareness by the kinds of ideas he chooses to dramatize.

Informal drama takes place within the framework of a group. The interaction which necessarily occurs between members of the group leads to another aspect of the child-development objective--an increasing awareness of others, or, the child's vision of himself as a social being. In order to create with others, children need to develop a sensitivity toward their fellows which allows a mutual trust and respect to build up as they participate in the give and take of improvised drama.

II. The Art of Drama: Objectives

The main objective in this category is to help the child understand and appreciate drama, which is a story told by means of dialogue and action. There are two levels of understanding involved here--an intuitive understanding and an intellectual understanding. Because children come to school fully steeped in play, they already have begun to grasp intuitively the essence of drama. Experiences in drama which are totally involving to the individual further this intuitive understanding. Children, particularly from the fourth grade up, also like to understand intellectually what is happening. Drama is to them a meaningful game in which knowing more of the rules makes the game more fun to play. This knowledge

can also give them more freedom to manipulate and design dramatic structure for themselves.

What should children be able to do in the sixth grade after several years of experience in creating drama? In other words, how will the teacher know they are progressing toward the goal of understanding the art? He can ask himself the following questions to help evaluate the effectiveness of the program:

1. Can the children act a polished improvisation without "drying up"--that is, without breaking character and wondering what to do or say next?

2. Are their reactions swift and suitable to the situation and character? Do they stay in character at all times when they are on stage--even when they are not speaking?

3. Is the flow of language confident?

4. Do they achieve good contrasts and climaxes in their scenes?

5. Do they know when to end a scene?

6. When they use costumes, props, lights, or sound effects, do they use them in a way that helps clarify the characters and situation?

If these questions can be answered affirmatively, the teacher can consider that the students understand and appreciate drama, intuitively at the very least.

If a child consistently develops a character, knowing who, what, where, and why about the character, if he consistently creates plots with beginning, middle, and end, problem-complication-climax-solution, if he can either watch or participate in a scene and state its strengths and weaknesses, both in acting and plot development, one can be reasonably certain the child has an intellectual understanding of drama.

THE PLACE OF DRAMA IN THE ENGLISH PROGRAM

Drama is included in two ways in this English program: first, as a subject in its own right, a part of the curriculum like composition, language and literature; and second, as a method for teaching in the other areas of the English program.

The drama curriculum is an attempt to develop a spiral and sequential program for the teaching of drama as a subject. The materials for grades one and two provide an experiential background for the young child, in which an environment, situations, ideas, and questions are set forth to help the child extend his horizons and expand his scope of perception.

The lessons in these early grades seek primarily to involve the child physically, emotionally, and mentally in dramatic action. While the principles of drama are inherent in the material used, there is no attempt to cause conscious learning about the subject of drama. In grades three through six, each year's curriculum is designed to give students from 40 to 45 experiences in drama, in which there is opportunity for learning on both the intuitive and intellectual levels.

Often drama and another subject go hand in hand. For example, in composition the teacher may wish to have the children develop a more acute awareness of their senses so they can write a descriptive paragraph. One of the abilities children need in order to grow in drama is also an acute awareness of the senses. A sensory pantomime may be set up, e.g., picking up a kitten or a snake, followed by discussion and the writing of the paragraph.[1] Literature and drama also work together in some lessons. In the first and second grade curriculum, drama is often used to enhance the student's involvement in a particular poem or story. The same techniques can be applied in the other grades when the teacher seeks to clarify a passage or to stimulate imaginative thinking. Several of the stories included in the literature curriculum in grades three and four have been adapted in script form and used in the drama curriculum for these grades. The purpose for using a script is different from that for the story, but each form serves to reinforce the other. The teacher will probably see other instances in which drama can be used effectively to lead into a piece of literature, or to clarify a passage in a story or poem, or to stimulate imaginative thinking. In other words, a flexible teaching approach is the key.

PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF DRAMA

According to Aristotle, whose Poetics has dominated dramatic theory for 2,500 years, the principal elements of drama include character, plot, dialogue, spectacle, style, and theme. The first four are of more immediate concern in a curriculum at the elementary level. (The term "theatre form" has been used as a simplified way of presenting the element of spectacle.)

Characterization is a broad term the teacher needs to understand if he is to be able to help children achieve anything more than a superficial level of character development. To create a character one needs to consider what the character is doing (action), why he is doing it (objective), how he feels about doing it (attitude), and how he accomplishes the action (physical attributes and movement). It is also essential that the character establish where he is--a forest, a burning house, a boat, etc. A child will find it virtually impossible to create that complete a character

[1]Following many of the drama lessons, there are specific suggestions for integrating a particular drama lesson with composition.

without much experience and work. The lessons in the drama curriculum are designed so that each aspect of characterization is treated singly. For instance, some lessons deal mainly with developing the objective of the character, others with character attitude, others with establishing environment.[2]

Plot is the term used in drama to indicate the story as it is revealed through the dialogue of the characters. The drama curriculum deals with several aspects of plot. One of these is basic plot structure--viewed very simply as including a beginning, middle, and end (or problem, complications, and solution). Lessons are planned to deal with each part of the plot structure. For example, one of the most troublesome problems for children is determining an appropriate ending for their scenes--instead of rambling on interminably, or stopping too abruptly. There are lessons designed to lead them to a better understanding of just when a scene should be concluded. Another aspect of plot is conflict. Children become intensely involved when they work with an idea which has strong conflict in it--conflict stemming from a confrontation with others, or with the environment, or with oneself. Suspense is often closely allied with conflict and holds high appeal for children, especially in the upper grades. Another aspect of plot is its locale--an action takes on quite a different meaning if it occurs at the bottom of the ocean, rather than at the supermarket or at home. A similar plot determiner is time--a knock at the door would have a different meaning if it came at midnight, or at noon, or on Christmas Eve, or a thousand years ago, or a thousand years hence. The children will have several opportunities to work with each of the aspects of plot.

Dialogue (or speech), needs little explanation. It contributes to character and plot. The voice becomes part of the character development both in its tone, pace, and dialect, and in the meaning of the words.

While the drama curriculum is based on informal, improvisational techniques, a study of drama would be incomplete if it did not show the relationship between dramatic content and theatre form. By theatre form we mean those devices employed to enhance and clarify the plot and characters, such as costumes, make-up, lights, sound effects, properties, and set furnishings. In grades 3-6, lessons are included in which the children actively use these devices to help communicate their ideas and characters. Other lessons include short play scripts, so that the students can become familiar with the written form of a play, and encounter simple problems of staging.

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[2]Following the summary of drama elements and acting skills is a chart, pages 57-63 showing the various concepts introduced at each grade level. By studying the chart, the teacher will be able to see the sequential development intended for each of the drama elements.

Theatre form implies presentation for an audience. However, the lessons in this curriculum, whether they use improvisational methods or scripts, are not intended to be performed for an audience other than the class members themselves. The purpose for including such lessons is simply to familiarize the students with a few basic theatre techniques and to show the relationship between content and form.

As stated earlier, drama means to do or to act. The central force of drama lies in the participants' physical manifestation of characters, plot, and dialogue--in short, acting.

ACTING SKILLS

The instrument that the child (or actor) uses to create drama is himself. He has his body, his voice, his mind. Obviously a few paragraphs cannot serve as a course in acting, so let us merely note the kind of exercises and experiences which allow the child to develop his instrument.

Movement exercises serve to free the child's energy and emotion; they allow the child to become aware of the workings of his body and to control them; they allow him to develop the ability to communicate through movement; they encourage him to unleash his imagination. Concentration exercises serve to help the child focus his attention on a single circumstance or set of circumstances to the exclusion of distracting factors. Concentration is absolutely essential if one is to create with belief. Sensory pantomimes are a conscious attempt to sharpen perception and open senses to heightened awareness. Imagination exercises serve to extend the mind so that it sees many and perhaps new possibilities and relationships. Speech exercises give needed practice in fluency of verbal communication, as well as promoting clear articulation and voice control. Sometimes exercises are given specifically to develop sensitivity toward others and interaction among players--clearly essential, since rarely does one act in isolation.

Although there are specific exercises designed to help expand concentration and imagination, these two elements should be present in every exercise. The extent to which they are present very often determines how successful a particular exercise is. Concentration is observable both in body responses (movements appropriate to the objective of the action and consistently appropriate to the character being developed) and verbal response (adherence to subject and/or objective). Imagination is observable in both body and verbal response. For example, the child can verbally describe a character or situation, create a plot from a variety of given stimuli, improvise dialogue in a situation, evaluate a scene and make suggestions for improvement, make the transfer from a given situation to one of his own making. Imaginative body response may be seen in the use of many parts of the body to explore movements or in the creating of a character by movement and gesture; it may also be seen in response to a given stimulus--for example, developing an image from a movement, or a movement from an image.

DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTS

I. Drama Elements

The drama activities for grades 1 and 2 are mainly preparatory, exercising the child's imagination and laying a broad foundation for the more structured drama study of the later years. In the curriculum for grades 3-6, the conceptual development of drama elements is cumulative in the curriculum. That is, the concepts introduced in grade three for example are used with different materials in succeeding grades, along with new concepts or more complex adaptations of previous concepts. When a concept is introduced in one grade, that means there is a conscious focus on it at that time, even though it may have been incorporated unconsciously by the children in an earlier grade. For example, concepts dealing with conflict are introduced in the fourth grade, but children in earlier grades will have incorporated conflict into many of their scenes.

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
CHARACTER: A character always has a reason for what he does. The physical appearance of a character affects the way he moves.	CHARACTER: A character reacts to an obstacle. A character reacts to his environment.	CHARACTER: A character reacts to other people. The attitude of a character often affects the way he carries out his action. A character's mood can change within the play or scene.	CHARACTER: Quality of movement often reveals character. Dialogue and voice reveal character. A character enters the scene from somewhere.

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
CHARACTER (cont'd):	CHARACTER (cont'd):	CHARACTER (cont'd):	CHARACTER (cont'd): People often respond differently to the same stimulus at various stages in their lives.
PLOT: A play or story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.	PLOT: A play is about people (or characters) in conflict. A conflict occurs when a character comes up against an obstacle.	PLOT: Conflict can come from another person, from the environment, or from within oneself. Suspense heightens interest. A play has a mood. A play has a certain style.	PLOT: In any play, there is a problem; complications set in, which cause a conflict; the problem is resolved. The action of a play evolves in a certain place or places. The action of a play occurs at a certain time. A story or play divides itself into scenes when there is a change of time or place, or when a new character enters.
THEATRE FORM: Sound effects can contribute to the believability of a play.	THEATRE FORM: Simple props can add to the clarity of a play.	THEATRE FORM: Simple scenery or furniture add to the clarity of a play.	THEATRE FORM: Make-up can enhance the clarity of a character.

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
THEATRE FORM (cont'd): Lights can help create the atmosphere of a play. Costumes can enhance the clarity of character portrayal. The audience must be able to hear the actors. A play is written in dialogue.	THEATRE FORM (cont'd): A change of lighting is one way to prepare an audience for the beginning of a play.	THEATRE FORM (cont'd):	THEATRE FORM (cont'd): The actors must be visible to the audience, regardless of the size and shape of the acting area or stage.

DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTS

II. Acting Skills

The conceptual development of acting skills is cumulative, but in a different way from that of the drama elements. Most of the basic concepts are formally introduced in the third grade, though children using this curriculum in grades one and two will have gained an unconscious awareness of them. The cumulative development comes with an increase of scope, depth, and difficulty of the exercises as the child builds upon previous experiences in drama and increases his capacity to think abstractly, to analyze, to perceive relationships, to note details, and to control his physical expression.

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
MOVEMENT: General Concept: Movement can free the child's energy and imagination and allow him to control his expression. Basic Concepts: 1. Good movement comes from relaxation. 2. Awareness of the body facilitates movement. 3. The body can move in diverse ways. a. Individual movement. b. Leader and group movement.	MOVEMENT: B Basic Concepts: 1. Good movement comes from relaxation. 2.a. Emphasis on parts of the body isolated variety of movement. 3.a. Individual movement within small groups.	MOVEMENT: Basic Concepts: 1. Good movement comes from relaxation. 2.a. Emphasis on parts of the body isolated to express abstract qualities. 3.a. Small groups coordinate movement. b. Moving to music.	MOVEMENT: Basic Concepts: 1. Good movement comes from relaxation. 2.a. Developing awareness of specific muscles needed to hold positions. 3.a. Partners alternate rhythms.

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
MOVEMENT (cont'd): c. Rhythmic movement.	MOVEMENT (cont'd):	MOVEMENT (cont'd):	MOVEMENT (cont'd):
4. Movement occurs in space. a. Awareness of individual space. b. Emphasis on the three levels of space.	4.a. Sharing space with a partner. b. Directions of movement.	4.a. Moving through a crowded space.	4.a. Patterns in space.
5. Movements are made with different kinds of effort, determined by use of weight, time, and space. a. Body heavy and light, slow and fast.	5.a. Changing space substance imaginatively.	5.a. Interpreting attitudes through movement.	5.a. Changing spatial relationships by changing effort.
6. Pantomime requires clear movement and gesture. a. Gross character movement.	6.a. Using objects. b. Becoming objects.	6.a. Changing style: exaggerated vs. realistic.	6 a. Detailed character movement.

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
SPEECH: Natural flow of speech stems from involvement in the situation. One communicates ideas with vocal tone and pitch, as well as words. Speech communication needs clarity of diction.	SPEECH: Communication requires listening as well as speaking.	SPEECH: (Emphasis on variety of tone and pitch, and on clarity of diction.)	SPEECH: The rate of speed on uses to express ideas differs according to the given circumstances.
IMAGINATION: General Concept: Every human being has an imagination which is developed by use. Basic Concepts: The senses stimulate the imagination. Movement stimulates the imagination. The word "if" stimulates the imagination. The need to solve a problem stimulates the imagination.	IMAGINATION: (The concepts are the same, but in each successive grade there is less need for the teacher to stimulate and guide ideas.)	IMAGINATION:	IMAGINATION: Exercising the imagination can develop agility and speed in perceiving relationships.

Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
CONCENTRATION: General Concept: The concentration of attention should be focused on a specific object, circumstance, or goal. (The general concept continues throughout the grades, with the concentration increasing in duration and widening in focus each year.)			
SENSORY AWARENESS: General Concept: Sense perception is heightened by conscious focus on each of the senses. (The general concept continues through the grades, with increasing sensory awareness revealing itself in the greater detail and accuracy with which the children pantomime, and their ability to focus on more than one sense at a time.)			

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING THE DRAMA CURRICULUM

1. Although these lessons have been carefully planned and thought out, each class is different and the teacher should decide for each lesson whether the material and exercises are suitable for his class. If the suggestions in an exercise do not fit the class--if the children's experience precludes the ideas given, or if the ideas seem either too sophisticated or too simple for the group, the teacher should change the material so the children can relate to it. In changing the material, however, an effort should be made to work with the concept included in the original lesson.

2. These lessons should not be used without detailed thought and planning beforehand. All the possibilities of action should be thought through so the teacher is prepared to discuss what the children come up with in terms of the objectives for the lesson.

It is imperative that each teacher make these lessons part of him and that he presents them in his own way. The lessons are written as they are in order to show how a lesson should flow. They are not intended to be used verbatim. After teaching several sessions, each teacher will no doubt discover how much or how little discussion guidance is needed in order to explore a concept with his particular class.

3. The lessons should be checked well in advance so that any necessary materials can be gathered. In the table of contents for each grade, a notation is made of materials which may be needed for specific lessons.

4. If the class needs more work in a certain area, the lesson can be altered to suit the need. For example, if concentration is very low at some time, a series of concentration exercises would be helpful. Following this introduction, the major teaching concepts are cross-referenced in an index according to pertinent lessons (see pages 73-4, below). It is perfectly satisfactory, and even desirable, to use exercises more than once, especially if the children are particularly responsive to certain exercises. Also, the teacher should feel free to use exercises from any grade level from first through six if they are applicable to his class.

The by-word is "Be flexible!" There should be no hesitation to try new ideas.

5. Some lessons are planned so they will take two class sessions. It is usually left to the teacher to decide where the first session should be terminated. On the second day of a lesson, it is wise to give a warm-up exercise before continuing the lesson. If a specific warm-up is not indicated, the teacher can use one from a previous lesson or one of his own.

6. There are special lessons for Halloween and Christmas holidays, and for spring. The teacher should note where these lessons are so they can be included at the appropriate times.

7. Movement is less restricted and much more stable if the children take off their shoes. They should get into the habit of removing their shoes at the beginning of each drama session. If slippery socks present a problem, they can also be removed until the end of the session.

If some children are concerned about soiling their clothes, the teacher can ask them to wear suitable clothing on drama days--something they won't mind doing floor work in.

8. Many of the lessons can be used in the classroom with very little or no furniture adjustment. It is up to the teacher to determine what he considers to be enough space for particular exercises. The first few lessons in each grade should definitely be used in the regular classroom. Then, if there is a room or gym with more space available, a move may be desirable. It should be remembered, though, that a very large space presents different kinds of control problems.

9. The use of a cymbal or tambourine, or other instrument, is a good control device. It can be used to call the children to order, to start or stop action, to help create mood and rhythmic background. Such a device is far more effective than the teacher's voice.

10. Never let the children begin acting until all are concentrating and quiet. Insist that they wait for the signal to begin.

11. Set up one inviolable ground rule when, and if, it seems necessary: If any children feel they cannot proceed without touching someone else, or if they interfere in any way with others, they may sit quietly and watch. Respect for others' efforts must be a requisite. Each teacher will no doubt find his own way to handle this when the situation arises, but interference should not be allowed to continue.

12. When questions are asked, it is not necessary to hear a response from everyone. The important point is to know that the children are responding to the question inwardly, if not overtly.

13. Groups:

a. Lessons often ask that the children work in pairs. Try to see that each person works with different partners from one time to the next.

b. Group work usually starts with twos then progresses to include larger numbers. When working in fours or fives, if some children seem left out and do not contribute, go back to using smaller groups.

c. When small groups are planning a scene, the teacher should go around to various groups to see if each has an idea. If they are having difficulty, he can ask questions to help stimulate the flow of ideas.

d. If the students don't seem ready for independent group work, the teacher can plan a scene with the entire class, then either play the scene in groups, or ask volunteers to play it for the rest of the class.

e. When various groups are playing their scenes simultaneously, they do not have to end at the same time. The groups should be directed to sit down, right where they are, when they are finished. They can watch until the other groups are done.

f. When the word "audience" is mentioned in the lessons, the term refers to those members of the class watching other members perform. The audience should always be directed to watch for something specifically related to the particular drama concept with which the lesson deals. After watching, they should be given an opportunity to respond.

g. In many lessons the option is given to have the groups play simultaneously or to have those who wish to do so play their scenes for the class. However--beware! Teachers have discovered that when the children are allowed to play their scenes for the class too often, their playing often becomes superficial and the level of concentration is poor. In other words, they begin to play only to an audience, rather than becoming involved in the role and the creative process. It is not necessary nor is it desirable to show scenes every time.

h. When a group does show their scene, they must be willing to share their voices so that they can be heard. Otherwise they should not be allowed to show the scene. If voice projection is a big problem in the class, some speech exercises may be in order.

14. Employ a student to be stage manager to help set the stage, give the signal for action, work the lights, etc., whenever possible.

15. If the class seems too excited at the end of the session to work satisfactorily at something else, be sure to use a brief relaxation exercise or concentration exercise to help them calm down. A discussion or quiet music can also be helpful.

16. The term "side coach" refers to the brief comments or questions made to help direct concentration or heighten mood or introduce a new idea while the children are acting. Students soon learn to listen to the teacher's voice while they continue to play.

17. The teacher should keep in mind that all responses, sincerely intended, are acceptable. He should not go into lessons with preconceived ideas of what is "correct" or acceptable. Their way may be better!

18. If certain scenes and characters seem too superficial, the problem will probably lie in one of two areas. First, the students may not have identified sufficiently with the characters. In this case, the teacher can ask further questions to elicit how the students would feel and what they would do in this kind of situation. If they still cannot identify, the material is wrong for them. Try another lesson instead.

Second, the students may have started with good involvement, but perhaps they have become easily distracted and unable to sustain the characters. In this case, more exercises in concentration and sense awareness may be in order, to cause them to focus on details and objectives.

19. Children are often directed in these lessons to close their eyes. The purpose for this is to aid concentration and to help them visualize the action before they actually do it. Most children have no trouble closing their eyes, but occasionally a few seem unable to do it on demand. In such cases, they can simply look down at the floor, with eyes lowered rather than closed.

20. Use of tapes:

a. There are tapes recorded for grades 3-6. They are intended for use at a particular point, noted in the curriculum. Description of the tapes, and specific suggestions for using them, are included in the lesson plans. The tapes should be played at a speed of 7-1/2 ips.

b. The teacher should be sure to listen to the tape before using it in class.

c. The length of the tapes varies. Although a tape may be only fifteen minutes long, the lesson itself may take longer if the students are directed to do a specific scene at the end.

d. Although there is time allowed on the tapes for dividing into groups, preparing scenes, etc., the time allowance may not be adequate for the class. If this is the case, the tape can be stopped until the children are ready, then started again.

e. Before playing any of the tapes, except those with stories, the children should be directed to take off their shoes and find their own space so they are ready for action.

21. The teacher's attitude is important to the success of the program. If he goes into the lessons with a spirit of fun and of an adventure to be shared, the students will respond in kind and learn more as a result. Relax and enjoy!

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"Remembering Summer"
"Simple Classroom Puppetry"
"More Puppets From Anything"
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"Pictures"
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C. Short Activities

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DRAMA ACTIVITIES

SIMPLE CLASSROOM PUPPETRY

Puppets are everywhere and are only waiting for someone to bring them to life. The most elaborately made puppet who spends his life in the bottom of a trunk is not nearly as exciting as the egg carton dragon performing on a makeshift stage in your classroom. In short, a puppet can be, or represent, just about anybody or anything, but most important of all, a puppet is meant to perform.

Background

Generally, puppets are of four basic types classified according to manipulation. Each type comes to us from an ancient and often complex form, but all can serve our purposes in their most simple style.

Hand Puppets: Anytime the hand and/or the fingers are the primary source of movement we have a hand puppet. Hand puppets can be so complex that they require two operators, or they can be as simple as ten painted fingers. Usually some hand covering is used, such as cloth, gloves, socks, etc., while the puppet has a head with a movable mouth or a head and moving hands.

Rod Puppets: Manipulated by rods or sticks, these puppets may have many moving parts or none. Most commonly they are operated by two or three rods which move the head and arms separately. For classroom use, attach sticks on any rigid support to puppets, toys, dolls, stuffed animals, paper figures, etc. Large wooden spoons and bottle brushes make superb instant rod puppets.

String Puppets: Traditionally called marionettes, these puppets can be extremely versatile because of their numerous movable parts. But for classroom use this is a disadvantage. By attaching one or two strings to a lightweight puppet and using a simple dowel, ruler, stick, etc. as a control bar, a simple string puppet can be successfully operated by the school child.

Shadow Puppets: Most often made of flat cut-out figures, shadow puppets are operated by rods, sticks, wires, or thread. They are called shadow puppets because they are viewed as shadows on a screen or before a projection of some kind. One of the easiest devices for creating shadow plays in the classroom is the overhead projector. Experiment with a wide variety of materials for different effects. Use small figures and pieces and they will project large; the rest of the space is needed for manipulation.

A PUPPET HUNT

OBJECTIVES:

To learn what a puppet is. To discover puppets in the environment. To perform with the puppet.

CONCEPT:

A puppet can be a representation of anything which is animated by human efforts.

PROCEDURE:

Introduction: Briefly discuss puppets, what they are, what they do. Most children know about puppets and most can talk about the different kinds. What they often don't realize is that puppets are everywhere, and almost anything they can animate can become a puppet.

Demonstration: In front of the class take an everyday item from the classroom, and make it into a puppet instantly. Have it talk to the children.

Example: A pencil can become a puppet simply by giving it a paper-cup skirt and pipe stem arms and attaching a paper face. Hold it like a rod puppet from behind your desk. Perhaps an eraser which you have properly dressed for the occasion can join it. They can discuss their mutual problems, how it feels when they are dropped, the increase in their work load, etc. Or use the apple from your lunch. Insert tacks, brads, and paper clips for features. Either cut the core out for your finger or force a pencil into the apple to serve as a rod. A napkin, scarf, or handkerchief can be used to cover your hand. Think of the stories the apple puppet has to tell.

Exploration:

I. The children will soon get the idea. Have them start the puppet hunt in their desks. Give them five minutes to bring a puppet to life by using the things in their desk. Encourage them to use just what is available, but they may share. Find ways to let them share these puppets immediately. They can do this by having puppet conversations with their neighbor or coming to the front of the room with a partner and playing a short improvised situation.

II. Next let the students work in teams of three (or more, if they are accustomed to working in groups). Organize the classroom puppet hunt.

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*Nature puppets are fun, so a puppet hunt out of doors is another possibility.

Establish ground rules such as: Get permission if the items are personal property. Remember to return personal property unharmed. Share. Set a time limit for the search and the making process.

Performing: All puppets are meant to perform. After the puppets have been found and made, each group should plan, practice, and perform with their puppets. One technique for encouraging short but satisfactory performances is to have on hand jokes, limericks, poems, riddles, and songs that puppets can learn quickly. Puppets have been known to play out their favorite stories.

Staging: Some simple and quick ways to create stages include tacking a blanket or butcher paper across a doorway, turning a table on its side, tacking a blanket between chairs. The key is--use what is available.

MORE PUPPETS FROM ANYTHING

There are any number of ways to create puppets, and the materials used are limited only by the creator's imagination. Dictating a step-by-step process can be stultifying and can make creative work impossible. However, by focusing on one particular type of puppet at a time, you and the student call attention to its special qualities. Emphasis is then placed on the manipulation and sound which bring the puppet to life. With this in mind, we offer the following ideas. Look for ways to expand these ideas and explore many new ones.

The concepts and objects below are to be considered for each puppet-making session and subsequent puppet performances.

CONCEPTS:

Puppets are figures of all sorts which are made to move by human efforts.

Puppets are of four basic types: hand, rod, string, and shadow.

Puppets can be made from a variety of materials.

Puppets come to life through movement and sound.

OBJECTIVES:

To construct either a hand or a rod puppet.

To put a puppet of one's own making into action through movement and sound.

To see puppets in action.

We start with these basic materials: scissors, glue, staplers, construction paper, poster paint. Additional materials will be noted.

"TERRIBLE TUBIES"

Additional materials:

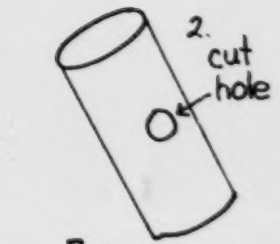
Tubes, i.e., paper towel tubes, aluminum foil tubes, poster tubes, toilet tissue tubes, or tubes made from heavy tagboard

Flexible paper or scrap materials for hand covering

Rubber bands

Procedure:

Tube puppets can be made vertically or horizontally. The upright tube serves nicely as a people type, while the horizontally position is good for animal types.



Vertical tube

1. Cover with construction paper or paint the tube.
2. Cut a hole for a nose. It should be placed so that index finger will poke through.
3. Draw, paint, or make construction-paper features--mouth, eyes, hair, etc.
4. Cut paper strips for hair, or use any other available material such as yarn, string, ribbon, etc. Glue around the inside of the tube.
5. Drape hand-covering material over the thumb, pointing finger and middle finger. Loop a rubber band over the hand covering around the thumb. Pull it around the back of the pointing finger and loop it over the middle finger.
6. The tube puppet is placed on the pointing finger which then serves as the puppet's nose when poked through the hole. The thumb and the middle finger become the puppet's arms.

Horizontal tube

1. Paint or cover tube with construction paper.
2. Make a hole in the bottom of the tube for the finger.
3. Cut a mouth at one end.
4. Draw, paint, or make construction-paper features including such things as legs and tails if needed.
5. Drape the hand covering over pointing finger and insert finger in the hole.

"PENCIL PEOPLE"

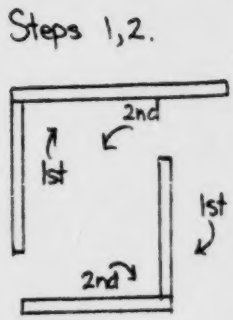
Additional materials:

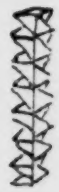
Pencils
Tape
Strips of colored construction paper

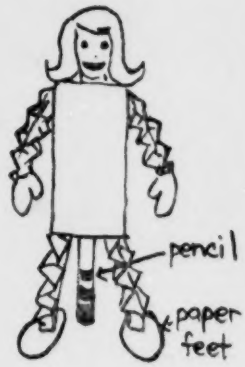
Procedure:

Before making the puppets,

1. Prepare in advance many strips of construction paper approximately 1/2" wide and 18" long in different colors.
2. Demonstrate the procedure for folding the paper strips.
   a. Glue the strips end to end at right angles. Let dry securely.
   b. Fold vertical strip up and horizontal strip over.
   c. Then fold vertical strip down, and horizontal strip over.
   d. Repeat b. and c. until all of each strip has been folded.
   e. Glue in place at the end.
3. Give each student two different colored strips. Direct them through the process. The strips of paper folded together in this manner will serve excellently as the "Pencil People's" arms and legs.
4. Out of construction paper make a face shape. Draw, paint, or make construction-paper features.
5. Make a body shape without arms or legs. Draw, paint, or make paper clothing to add to the body shape.
6. Make paper hands and feet.
7. Using the folded paper strips, make arms and legs of appropriate lengths for the body.
8. Glue arms and legs in place.
9. Glue hands and feet in place.
10. Tape a pencil to the back.







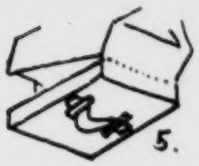
"MILKCARTON MOUTH MONSTERS"

Additional materials:

From the lunch room, enough 1/2 pint milk cartons for each student
Tape

Procedure:

Before making the puppets,



1. Wash and dry the milk cartons.
2. The "to open" part of the milk carton is the front. Approximately 3/4" from the bottom of the carton cut a slit in the front and the two sides. Do not cut the back.
3. Before adding any features to the milk carton, manipulate the carton so the back will bend easily.
4. Glue on or staple on construction-paper features. Teeth, tongues, and wild hair are especially appropriate. Note: Glue will adhere if the wax is scratched off the carton with scissors.
5. Make a finger strap by taping a strip of paper on the bottom of the carton.
6. The thumb fits in the bottom finger strap while the other three or four fingers fit snugly in the indented area at the top of the carton.

Bringing the puppet to life

Every puppet requires its own particular type of manipulation. Each puppeteer must find the best method for himself. It is the puppeteer's job to bring the puppet to life. A few simple techniques will help create this illusion. Puppets, like people, talk to each other, not to the sky. In other words, when a puppet is talking it must look in the approximate direction of whoever is being addressed, and the other puppets must seem to be listening and reacting to fellow puppets. If the puppet's mouth moves, the talking needs to be coordinated. So that the puppet can be heard, the operator needs to speak loudly and clearly. The puppet must be seen, so the puppeteer needs to check the position of the puppet to see that he is not shrinking or growing during the performance (unless this is required for the character!). Hand-puppet movements should be somewhat exaggerated and need to match the dialogue. The sounds a puppet makes should match his character, and the operator should strive for interesting vocal effects. Practice in front of a mirror is often a great help in developing these techniques.

In this early stage of puppetry, we are striving for originality and spontaneity. Nevertheless, each puppet presentation should be a challenge for the puppeteer and should show growth. With guidance, puppeteers and the classroom audience can usually evaluate a performance effectively, and this is to be encouraged. Put the focus on the puppet, not the individual, to minimize self-consciousness.

Finding puppet plays

Puppet plays, like puppets, are everywhere. Favorite stories, songs, nursery rhymes, poems, ballads, TV commercials, etc., are good sources. The plays can be handled in a number of ways. A reader may narrate everything while the puppet pantomimes the action. A reader may narrate descriptive parts while the puppets speak the dialogue. The puppeteers may do the narration and the dialogue. Choral verse or singing may be performed while the puppets pantomime action. Puppets may perform a dance or a song to a record. Puppets may perform to a previously taped presentation. Choose whatever method is best suited to the needs of the puppeteers and their puppet.

PEOPLE PUPPETS AND BALLOONS

OBJECTIVES:

To use body movement to express thought and character.

To relax.

1. Procedure: Imagine that you are a string puppet, a marionette, all in a heap. (If necessary, discuss what marionettes are.) You are completely lifeless. Someone comes along and picks up your arm string, but that is all--the rest of you is limp. Now the other arm is picked up. Both arms are let down. Now your head string is picked up and you are pulled up to a standing position by your head string--the rest of you flops. (Continue on with various parts of the body, including mouth and eyes being manipulated.)

The puppet master pulls the necessary strings to make you march--not as a person would march, but as a marionette would. (You might use a drum or tambourine for rhythm). Now the puppet master pulls the strings to make you dance. What else could the puppet master make you do? (Use a few of their ideas. Close with the suggestion that they are put back, all in a heap.)

2. Procedure: This time you are a beautiful brand new balloon--your favorite color. Someone is going to buy you. Make yourself very flat. Someone is picking you up and blowing you up. Gradually fill with air so that you can feel it in every part of your body. You are blown out the door by the wind and you go bouncing and floating along. Sometimes you float up high, sometimes you bounce down low.

Suddenly you realize you have a leak and you feel yourself growing smaller and smaller, and finally you are so limp, you collapse.

SHOES

OBJECTIVE:

To use body movement to express thought and character.

PROCEDURE:

1. (Either use this lesson on a day when a child comes to school with new shoes on or bring in a pair of your new shoes to focus their attention.)

It is such fun to get new shoes. If you could have any kind of new shoes you wanted, what kind would you get? (Listen to a few responses. Then direct them to put their favorite shoes on and walk around in them.) What do they make you feel like doing? Go ahead and do it. (Responses might include dancing, running, jumping, etc.)

2. What exactly are shoes? (Accept all answers.) There are all sorts of interesting shoes or things we can put on our feet. If we had a store that had nothing in it but things for our feet, what might we have in that store? (Swim fins, track shoes, snow shoes, ballet slippers, skates, etc.)

Think of one pair of shoes or something that goes on the feet that you think would be the most fun. (Allow time for thought.) Our shoe shop is going to be a special one--it is an enchanted shoe shop where the shoes come to life at a certain time and start to move. Maybe they are practicing so they'll be very good at what they were made for. What do you think football shoes would do? Snow shoes? (Discuss a few different shoes, bringing out the idea that they will each move in a different way.)

Each of you is a pair of shoes. Find a spot in the enchanted shoe shop, and when the music starts, let's see how you come to life. (Music should be a lively, rhythmic selection.)

(After they have all had a chance to come to life, you might divide them into groups and they can watch each other. The audience should look for action that shows clearly what kind of shoes they are. Afterward you can ask questions which focus on action, such as "What did Judy do that let you know she was a pair of toe shoes?")

ADDITIONAL ACTION:

If the class is interested in make-believe, you could discuss what elf shoes look like. They can try them on and notice what happens to them! These special elf shoes could be hidden in a secret place, to be taken out on special occasions for visits to elf land.

CLOWNS

OBJECTIVE:

To use body movement to express character.

To focus attention on a specific idea.

PROCEDURE:

1. There is a big box in front of each one of you. (Imaginary.) Reach in and take out a pair of baggy old pants. They have bright red suspenders to hold them up. Put them on.

Now reach in and find an old coat with funny patches all over it. Put it on.

The next thing you see is a funny clown's nose. See if you can put that on.

What else do you see in the box that a clown might use? (They can "put on" various items. If someone mentions shoes, continue with the rest of the lesson from that point. If no one mentions shoes, you say it.)

Look at these funny old shoes. They are big and floppy with all sorts of colors on them. These are very special shoes--they are clown shoes and quite magic. The second you put them on, you will find yourself doing some thing very funny, just the way a clown would. Go ahead, put them on and see what happens. (Allow time for them to react.)

2. You really are clowns! Let's see how the clowns walk around the room. They don't look like boys and girls at all.

3. Find a partner and think up a clown's trick with your partner. (Various partners may want to share their tricks. You can lead the rest of the class in laughter and applause, popcorn eating, etc.)

ADDITIONAL ACTION:

(After this experience, the children may want to plan other circus acts. You can be the ringmaster to help coordinate the acts and introduce them with gusto. Or, a particularly confident child might want to play the ringmaster.

WALKING

OBJECTIVES:

To focus attention on a specific idea.

To develop flexibility of imagination in problem solving.

1. Procedure: We are going to see how many ways we can walk today. Find your own space to start from and be careful when you are walking not to touch anyone else. Listen carefully and do just what I tell you.

Walk from one side of the room to the other. Don't touch anyone.

Walk back, taking very big steps.

Walk on your tiptoes with your arms stretched up high.

Walk with your body close to the floor.

Walk sideways.

Walk backwards.

Stop and listen.

2. Procedure: We will continue with our walking, but while you walk I will tell you about different things that happen. (Use a cymbal or other instrument to signal their starting and stopping.)

a. At the signal begin walking. You are very happy for some reason. Maybe something nice happened to you and you are eager to get home to talk to your mother. You have a long way to go, though. Let's see how happy you are while you're walking. (Allow time enough for them to establish the feeling in their walk.)

b. Suddenly a big snarly dog appears on the sidewalk ahead of you. His teeth are bared and he is growling. He starts chasing you. You are a long way from home. Figure out what to do. (After describing each of the confrontations, allow enough time for the children to solve the problem. When some have finished, suggest that they continue walking.)

c. Continue your walk. You are relieved but still a little nervous. You look at the houses around you. Somehow they don't look familiar at all. You must have taken the wrong turn and now you are lost. Figure out what to do.

d. You are walking along and you see something being blown by the wind. You run to catch it. It is something very nice. What is it? Can you take it along with you?

e. The wind is blowing harder. You have to really push against it. It is hard to walk. Suddenly the wind changes direction and blows from behind you. You feel like you're sailing, you are being pushed so fast. You are almost home! The wind blows you through the front door and into your favorite chair.

TANGLED

OBJECTIVES:

To focus attention on a specific goal.

To develop ideas into a scene or scenes.

Procedure: Imagine that you suddenly find yourself all tangled up in a very large object. It could be a huge spider web, or an octopus, or a parachute, or tree branches, or anything else you can think of. Find a space on the floor. Think about what it is you are tangled in. What does it feel like on your body, what color is it, how big is it? At my signal, carefully try to get away from it.

(Afterward, ask what they were tangled in. Some of the ideas might suggest a good idea for a scene. For example, if someone were involved with an octopus, you might ask what the person was doing when it happened, where were his friends, what were they doing, what else might happen, etc. Then all or some of the class could play out the scene.)

CONCENTRATION GAME

OBJECTIVE:

To focus attention on movement without being obvious about it.

Procedure: Sit down in a big circle facing in. I'm going to show you how to play a game. Try to see what I am doing but don't keep staring right at me. As soon as you see me doing something, do exactly what I am doing. When I change to something else, you change to. (Play for a minute, until they get the idea of changing actions swiftly.)

We are going to take turns being detectives today. The detective is going to leave the room. While he is gone, the rest of us will choose a leader. Our leader is going to move in some way and we must move just as he does. When he changes movements, we change. The detective wants to catch the leader, so he will be watching carefully to try to find out who the leader is. When the detective catches the leader, the detective chooses someone else to take his place and the leader does the same. (Or, if the detective has difficulty finding the leader, set a time limit and then change.) Concentrate on doing what your leader does without looking right at him. (Choose children for leader and detective and the game starts.)

REMEMBERING SUMMER

OBJECTIVE:

To recall and recreate a pleasant experience.

Procedure: One of the nicest things to do is to remember and think about times when we have had a lot of fun. What did you do last summer that was a lot of fun?

(When the children mention activities that lend themselves to group play, guide them to recreate their experiences. For example, they might all imagine they are at the beach doing the one thing they like best to do whenever they go to the beach. Other possibilities include boat trips, hikes on the beach or in the woods, playing various games, building forts, making cookies, etc.

As they play you can side coach in order to draw their attention to the way things felt, smelled, sounded, etc.

Another possible approach would be to divide the room into various areas--beach, water, woods, house, or whatever they mention--and let them choose the place to play in where they had most fun.)

A SPECIAL PRESENT
(Holiday)

OBJECTIVES:

To develop flexibility of imagination in problem solving.

To focus attention on a specific goal.

1. Movement warm-up: You each have a large paintbrush and a bucket of your favorite color paint. You are to paint your name in very large letters on the imaginary wall in front of you. (Side coach as they play.) You feel very happy doing this. Use great, huge letters. (Music might help here, such as a selection from a Leroy Anderson album.)

Now paint the name of someone you like very much--either a boy or a girl. When you finish, put your bucket down and stand back to admire your work. Move up a little closer to look at something. As you do, you trip over your bucket and get paint all over yourself! Quickly, what will you do? (They do it and then you signal them to stop.)

2. Procedure: During the holiday season we usually give presents to people, don't we. What if you could give a different kind of present to your mother this year to show her how much you care for her? This is such a busy time for mother. Can you think of something you might do for your mother that would make her happier than any present you could buy? Maybe something to help her? Instead of telling your idea, let's act it out. First, imagine that your present is a surprise. You just begin doing whatever it is as well as you can and your mother finds you. (You can play the role of mother, if you want to, and react with delight at the help they are giving you. Or, if you would not feel comfortable playing the role, just let them play for a minute. Then side coach something like this, "Your mother just came in. She watches you. She is so happy to see what you are doing, she gives you a big hug.")

Now, let's share some of your good ideas. (Five or six children at a time can pantomime their ideas. The rest of the class will try to determine what they did.)

PICTURES

OBJECTIVES:

To allow a picture to stimulate the imagination.
To see the relationship between cause and effect.
To enact a scene depicting strong feelings.

MATERIALS:

Select pictures from magazines, newspapers or other sources in which a person's face clearly reflects his feelings--such as joy, anger, sadness.

Introduce: (Show a picture to the class. Ask such questions as the following: How does this person feel? How do you know he feels that way? Have you ever felt that way? Why do you suppose he feels so happy--or sad or angry?)

Plan: (Divide the class into pairs or groups of three. You can ask them all to plan a scene, using the same picture as the stimulus, showing why the person in the picture feels the way he does. Or, each group can work from a different picture. For instance, one group might have a picture of a smiling, happy man (father?). Another group might have a picture of a grinning, toothless boy, etc.)

Act: (They can all act their scenes simultaneously. If some groups want to show their scenes to the rest of the class, they can.)

Evaluate: (The children can briefly comment on how they think the people in the scene felt and why.)

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS:

Pictures are a valuable source of stimulation for children's dramatic invention. Some pictures clearly show a situation happening, which the children could act out. Some pictures set a mood and stimulate thought. For example, a picture of a dark, eerie forest might motivate a very dramatic scene. You may want to keep a file on hand of pictures that could serve as motivators for drama. As the children progress in their ability to work on their own, perhaps they could go to the drama picture file and choose one to serve as a basis for an improvisation. They could either act it just for themselves, or practice it and then show the class.

HAPPINESS IS . . .

OBJECTIVES:

To focus attention on a specific idea of what happiness is.
To work with a partner to express and communicate an idea.

Introduce: (Read one of the Charles Schulz's Happiness Is . . . books. You might want to let the children respond verbally to some of the ideas presented. Or, lacking the book, ask them to think about something that really makes them feel happy.)

Plan; Find a friend, or maybe two friends, and decide on something that really makes you happy that you could act out. Make up a little play about what happens. You can have any kind of characters you want in your scene.

Act: When you have decided what is going to happen, try acting it out to see if it shows what really makes someone happy. (After they have all played their scenes simultaneously, some may want to act their scene out for the rest of the class. They may use words if they want to.)

Evaluate: (After each scene, ask them what happiness was in that scene. You may want to write the ideas down on the board.)

TROUBLE IS . . .

OBJECTIVES:

To focus attention on specific ideas of what trouble is.
To work in groups to create scenes that will communicate their ideas.

Introduce: Not too long ago we read a book about what happiness is and you acted out some of your own ideas. Today we will make up a book of our own and make its pages come to life. Only instead of each page starting out with the words "Happiness Is . . ." they will start out with the words "Trouble Is. . . . " Let's talk a little bit about trouble. Everyone gets into trouble sometimes. What is trouble to you? (Allow enough discussion time so that several ideas are suggested, but don't exhaust the subject.)

Plan and Act: (The planning can be accomplished in one of several ways. The whole class can decide on certain ideas for trouble and then divide into various "pages"--each small group acting out one idea of what trouble is. One child can be the narrator "reading" the books. Maybe big sheets of paper could have the words printed on them. The actors can pose as if they are an illustration from the book, and when their page is read they can come to life.

Or, perhaps you could guide each reading group to plan out their own ideas for the book and decide how they will be acted out.

Each reading group could present its "book" for the rest of the class. Encourage the children to talk in their scenes.

SHORT ACTIVITIES

These activities are intended for those one to five minute interludes that often occur during a day. They can also be used when the children need an action-break from other classroom work. The suggestions are not placed in any sequential order. Use those which seem appropriate for your class situation. This is just a beginning list and you will no doubt have more ideas to add. Many of the activities can be expanded upon if there is time available.

Holidays and Seasons

A. Halloween

1. Can they use just their hands to make the shape of a pumpkin? Can they use their hands and arms together to make the shape of a pumpkin?

2. The children imagine that their faces are jack-o'-lanterns. Make a happy jack-o'- lantern face. A funny one. A sad one. A scary one.

3. They imagine they are slowly turning into witches. First the hands begin to change, then the arms, etc. They have a big bubbling pot in front of them. What special ingredients will they put into the pot to make a powerful spell?

4. Ask them to imagine that a witch has cast a spell on them and they feel themselves changing into something strange. At first they don't know what they are changing into, but finally it becomes very clear. What are they? What can they do to become themselves again?

B. Thanksgiving

1. What is one thing they look forward to eating at Thanksgiving? They imagine they have it in front of them. Take a bite. Taste how good it is. Is it hot? Can they smell it as well as taste it? Do they need to chew it a lot or does it melt in the mouth?

2. Pantomime something you are thankful for and see if the children can guess what it is. For example, you might play with a pet kitten, or pretend you are putting on new clothes. Volunteers can then pantomime their ideas for the class to guess.

C. Christmas

1. They imagine they have a Christmas present in front of them. Look at the way it is wrapped. Pick it up. Is it heavy? What happens if they shake it? Do they have any idea what is inside? Could they unwrap it very carefully, so that nothing tears, look inside, and then wrap it up again so no one will know they peeked?

2. They imagine each one has a Christmas tree of his very own. See how beautifully they can decorate it.

3. They pretend to make Christmas cookies. You can suggest what to put in them, direct them to roll out the dough, cut the cookies, decorate them. Smell them baking. Eat one.

4. Each one is a very special present under the Christmas tree. Someone in their family will be so happy when that present is opened. Each child thinks for a minute what he is. When you "unwrap" them, maybe they can do something that will let the others know what they are.

5. They imagine that they are little birds getting all ready for Christmas. What will they do?

6. They are Santa's helpers getting Christmas toys ready and helping Santa distribute them.

D. Fall

1. Leaves probably have more fun in the fall than at any other time. What happens to them? Each child imagines he is a leaf on a tree, turning bright yellow or red. It is just barely hanging on the branch. Soon a breeze will blow it off and it will go sailing on the wind and finally flutter to the ground. Another gust of wind scoops it up and sends it flying again. Where will it land this time?

2. They imagine they are helping their families by getting a rake and raking up all the leaves in their yards. They put all the leaves in a basket and take them to where they can be burned safely. Strike a match. Watch the leaves burn. Smell the smoke.

3. Each one is a big pile of leaves that someone is going to burn. See how little-by-little all of the leaves catch on fire. Now the leaves are all burned up, but we want to make sure the fire is out. Pour water on leaves. Will there by any noise when the water is thrown on the fire?

E. Winter

1. They pantomime something they like to do best in the snow.

2. They imagine they are snowflakes ready to dance and swirl down to earth. The snow makes no sound. No one would even know it was snowing if they didn't look. The children think where they'll want to land--on a car, a dog's back, someone's nose, a tree, a lake, etc.

3. They imagine they are going ice skating for the first time. Then they pretend they are such good skaters they have joined the Ice Follies.

4. They pretend they are puppies out in the snow for the first time.

F. Spring

1. In two's, one can be the pitcher and one the batter. Reverse roles.

2. Each one is a little bird inside an egg. The bird is just ready to hatch. How can it break the shell so it can get out? See how hard it has to work.

3. Each one is a new born colt (or other animal) with very wobbly legs.

4. What are some games they like to play outside in the nice weather?

5. Each one has a kite and is trying to fly it on a nice windy day. What happens when it gets caught in a tree?

6. Each one pretends he is the kite.

G. Summer

1. Each one thinks of one thing he is looking forward to doing in the summer. He shows rather than tells what it is. When an activity is guessed, the rest of the class can join in for a few moments of play.

2. They imagine they are at a nice sandy beach but they didn't bring anything to play with or to use to build with. They want to make something in the sand. They look around on the beach for some things they might use. After they have collected enough, they begin making what they want to in the sand.

3. Let's go fishing. They get their gear ready. Will they need to dig some worms first? Continue on, describing the action as they do it.

4. Let's go exploring in the woods. They try to find something special--or funny, or scary, or lovely, or tiny, or magical, etc.

H. Birthdays

1. Make a great big birthday cake for _____. Each person thinks of something special to put in it that will make it good. The bowl is so big everyone has to help stir the batter. Can they work together to pour it into the pan? How can they get it into the oven? How can they decorate it? Each one frosts and decorates a part of the cake. They light the candles and sing to the birthday child. Then eat a piece of cake.

2. Each row of children think of a special present to give to the birthday child. They act out what the present is.

3. They pretend they are trick candles on a birthday cake. They are blown out, then they flame up again.

4. They try to think of presents that begin with the birthday child's first initial. Pantomime what they are. For example, Bobby might get blocks, a bunny, a bicycle, a bugle, boots, bubble gum, etc.

Senses

A. Touch (They should keep their eyes closed to help focus on the tactile sense.)

1. The children touch their desks or a piece of clothing and let their hands find out how it feels. Talk about it.

2. They sit at desks or tables. They reach ground until they find something rough. Feel it. Can they tell what it is without looking? Do the same with something smooth, cool, long, short, etc.

3. Do the same as number two, but use bare feet instead of hands.

4. Do the same as number two, but use only the forearm, keeping the hands clenched.

5. With partners, they guide each other's hands to touch something. Talk about it.

6. Bring a few "touch bags" with something in them. Each child touches the object in the bag. Afterward, discuss what it felt like. Children can be encouraged to bring something interesting to touch too. Use more than one bag at once, to conserve on time and maintain interest level.

B. See

1. Briefly describe something you see in the room. Children try to guess what it is.

2. They look at a picture for thirty seconds. What did they see?

3. How many circles can they find in the room? Triangles? etc.

4. In pairs, "A" puts three to five color crayons on the desk. "B" looks then closes his eyes while "A" either rearranges one or takes one away. "B" then tells what was done. Reverse roles.

5. You make a simple series of movements. All the children watch, then try to repeat what you did exactly. After a few times, a child might want to be the leader.

6. Hold up an interesting abstract object, like a piece of driftwood. Ask the children what it reminds them of.

7. The children close their eyes and "see" their room at home. See where the bed is, the closet, toys, etc. See their mother go into the room. Watch to see what she will do. Discuss what they "saw."

C. Hear (eyes closed)

1. Listen to sounds inside the room. Outside the room, but in the building. Outside the building.

2. You make some sounds in the room. See if the children can identify them. For example, open a drawer, erase the chalkboard, tap with a pencil, click the light switch.

3. Think of familiar sounds and ask the children to "listen" to them, one at a time. For example, the sounds a pet makes, an airplane overhead, a lawn mower, a car coming in your driveway, kitchen sounds, washing machine, etc.

4. The children make a funny sound with their voices. They listen to the sound. Each one listens to a neighbor's funny sound.

5. Tap someone on the shoulder, he says something. The class listens and tries to identify the speaker.

6. Start a story and let the children add to it.

7. They listen to a piece of music and raise their hands when they hear either a certain instrument or a particular melody, or when the drums come in, etc.

8. They listen to music and let the music suggest pictures to them.

D. Taste

1. Pantomime eating an ice cream cone. Each child gets his favorite kind. They feel it in their mouths and taste it.

2. They imagine they are eating some hot soup. They have an ice cube in their mouths.

3. They taste something sour. Something sweet.

4. They taste something they love to eat. Then, something they don't like.

E. Smell

1. Each one thinks of a cooking smell he likes and imagines it.

2. Each pretends to smell a flower.

3. Bring several bottles or jars with different aromatic contents. They can close their eyes and try to identify them, or they can pick out the one that is perfume, or the one that is something to eat, etc.

4. Discuss beach smells, forest smells, Christmas smells, etc.

Animals

A. Pets

1. "A" is the pet puppy or kitten and "B" is playing with it. Reverse roles.

2. Each one is a pet who has just learned a new trick. They could work in pairs, as in number one.

3. Each one is a pet who is very hungry. What will they do? They could work in pairs.

4. They are kittens (or other animals) lost out in the rain.

5. They are cats trying to catch a bird or a mouse.

B. Zoo and Circus Animals

1. They can work in groups to do a circus animal act.

2. Each can be a wild circus cat with his own special trick.

3. They can be monkeys at the zoo, entertaining the people watching.

4. They can be their favorite zoo animals. Others try to guess what they are.

C. Farm Animals

1. They can sing "Old MacDonald Had A Farm." When it comes time for a new animal to be named, someone who has an idea can act out the animal. The others guess what it is and include it in the song while the person continues to be the animal. Each of the animals repeats his action at the appropriate phrase in the song. See how many farm animals they can think of.

D. Miscellaneous Animals

1. They can think of the various animals that hop or jump. Can they show how a bunny hops differently from a frog?

2. You can give clues as to which animal you are thinking of by describing the way it moves. For example, "I'm thinking of an animal that slithers in the grass." They act it out and tell what it is.

3. Ask them to think of two animals that like to play with each other. They can act out how they play.

Play

A. Ball Activities

1. They imagine they have a ball. How many things can they do with a ball?

2. They play catch with a big, light ball or balloon.

3. They roll a bowling ball.

4. In pairs, they play a game that uses a ball.

5. They play catch with a very heavy ball.

6. One person does something with a ball. He passes it on to another person, at which time the size and weight of the ball can change. The second person uses it and passes it on. They should try not to repeat anyone else's activity.

B. Inside Play

1. In small groups, they can pretend to play something they like to play inside at home.

C. Outside Play

1. In small groups, they can imagine they are playing hop-scotch, jump rope, kick ball, etc. If they wish, each group can play their game and let the others guess what they are doing.

Make-Believe

A. Imaginary Creatures

1. They are elves in the forest trying to find something to make a costume out of for a big party. What could they find in the forest?

2. They are themselves and are in the forest looking for elves. They finally find one, catch it, and talk to it.

3. They are giants eating dinner.

4. They are elves secretly doing something to help someone.

5. They are tiny elves and fairies playing in Magic Land. What special things will they find to do that boys and girls are too big to do?

6. Witches (See suggestions under Halloween.)

7. They can be Jack Frost mixing his special frost and painting windows at night.

B. "What would you do if . . . " Games (You describe the situation, the children immediately respond in action.)

1. What would you do if you woke up and smelled smoke?

2. What would you do if you were a snowman who came to life?

3. What would you do if you woke up and found that your feet had grown to an enormous size?

4. What would you do if a fish started to talk to you while you were swimming?

5. What would you do if you started to grow smaller and smaller?

6. What would you do if a fairy asked you to visit fairyland? What might you see and do there?

7. What would you do if you got lost in the woods? What will you do when it gets dark?

8. What would you do if you wanted to build a secret fort in your backyard?

Miscellaneous

A. Pantomime

1. They can imagine they are helping clean their houses for a big party.

2. They can work in the yard, cleaning it up, mowing the grass, weeding, etc.

3. They can think of what they would like to be when they grow up and pantomime for the rest of the class to guess. You could start by dancing like a ballerina. When they guess, they can all join in.

B. Movement

1. Explore the various ways they can move their hands. Do the same with other parts of the body.

2. They can do various locomotor movements forwards, then, at your signal, backwards--walking, running, hopping, jumping, etc.

3. "Stretch to the ceiling.
Stretch to each wall.
Fold yourself up
'Til you're nothing at all.

Now by some magic
You're beginning to grow!
What is it you are?
Only you know!"

4. Play some music and let various body parts "dance" to the music. For instance, shoulders, elbows, toes, etc. Change the tempo and see if they adjust their movements.

C. Relaxation (The following are images which aid relaxation.)

1. A snowman melting--or an ice cube, or a popscicle, or a candle.

2. A sand castle slowly being washed away by the waves. You could use a cymbal for the rhythmic sound of the waves.

3. A puppet whose strings are released.

4. A piece of dough being gently rolled out.

5. A piece of macaroni boiling and then, when it is cooked, settling down on the bottom of the pan.

6. A swing gently bein g blown by a breeze, back and forth.

7. Lying on a cloud and looking down on the earth.

8. A sleeping cat, curled up in a chair.

9. A lump of clay someone is shaping carefully.

10. A book lying open on a shelf.

11. A log floating in the water.

12. A bright light that slowly fades out.